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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5808

INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 9605

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS -- AARON COPE AND IO/UNP -- PAUL WICKBERG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/14/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: REFERENDUM IN BURMA DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 26677 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson for reasons
1.4 b, d.

11. (C) PolOff on March 14 conveyed to MFA reftel points urging China to make clear to the Burmese regime that the planned May referendum on the regime's draft constitution should adhere to internationally accepted standards for free and fair elections and referenda. MFA International Organizations and Conferences Department UN Division Deputy Director Sun Xiaobo said China has not received a briefing from UN Special Advisor Gambari on the results of his trip to Burma and does not want to jump to conclusions. However, China's preliminary view is that Gambari "achieved some progress," though China does not deny there remain "reasonable concerns." Sun said Gambari has emphasized that his work is "a process," and China believes engagement with Burma will require "patience and persistence" and problems "cannot be resolved by one or two visits." On the prospect of UN Security Council action, Sun said China's view is that the Security Council is not an appropriate forum to discuss Burma. Other fora, like the UN Secretary General's "Friends of Burma" group, are more appropriate and useful.
RANDT